

SPIRIT MESSENGER

AND

HARMONIAL ADVOCATE.

Behold! Angels are the brothers of humanity, whose mission is to bring peace on earth.

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Revelations of Nature.

ELECTRO-BIOLOGY.*

A SCIENTIFIC ESSAY.

That the phenomena now so commonly exhibited under the above title, demand a careful examination, and, if possible, a distinct explanation, will be readily admitted. It is clear that they ought not to be allowed to rest as materials for popular amusement, but should be submitted to strict scientific inquiry. The theory which so boldly ascribes them to electric influences should be strictly examined. If this theory is found to be untenable, some important questions will remain to be considered; such as: May not the phenomena be explained on physiological principles? and, Is it not probable that the means employed may have an injurious tendency?

The extent to which public attention has been excited by the phenomena may be guessed by a glance at the advertising columns of the *Times*, and by placards meeting the eye in various parts of the country, announcing that, "at the Mechanics' Institute," or elsewhere, experiments will be performed in "electro-biology," when "persons in a perfectly wakeful state" will be "deprived of the powers of sight, hearing, and taste," and subjected to various illusions. One advertiser professes to give "the philosophy of the science;" another undertakes to "reveal the secret," so as to enable any person to make the experiments; and another undertakes the cure of "palsy, deafness, and rheumatism." Lectures on the topic, in London and in the provincial towns, are now exciting great astonishment in the minds of many, and give rise to considerable controversy respecting the theory and the *modus operandi*.

It is on this latter point—the means by which the effects are produced—that we would chiefly direct our inquiry, for we shall very briefly dismiss the attempt to explain them by a vague charge of collusion or imposture.

If this charge could be reasonably maintained, it would, of course, make all further remarks unnecessary, as our topic would then no longer be one for scientific investigation, but could only be added to the catalogue of frauds. It is possible that there may have been some cases of feigning among the experiments, but these do not affect the general reality of the effects produced. —So epilepsy and catalepsy have been feigned; but these diseases are still found real in too many

instances. We need not dwell on this point; for it may be safely assumed that all persons who have had a fair acquaintance with the experiments of electro-biology (so-called) are fully convinced that, in a great number of cases, the effects seen are real and sincere, not simulated. The question then remains: Are these effects fairly attributed to "electric" influence, or may they not be truly explained by some other cause?

Before we proceed to consider this question, it will be well to give some examples of the phenomena to which our remarks apply. We shall state only such cases as we have seen and carefully examined.

A. is a young man well known by a great number of spectators—unsuspected of falsehood—knows nothing of the experimenter or of electro-biology, not even the meaning of the words. After submitting to the process employed by the lecturer—sitting still, and gazing fixedly upon a small disk of metal for about a quarter of an hour—he is selected as a suitable subject. When told by the experimenter that he can not open his eyes, he seems to make an effort, but does not open them until he is assured that he can do so. He places his hand upon a table—is told that he can not take the hand off the table—seems to make a strong effort to remove it, but fails, until it is liberated by a word from the lecturer. A walking-stick is now placed in his right hand, and he is challenged to strike the extended hand of the lecturer. He throws back the stick over his shoulder, and seems to have a very good will to strike, but can not bring the stick down upon the hand. He afterward declares to all who question him, that he "tried with all his might" to strike the hand. A. has certainly no theatrical talents; but his looks and gestures, when he is made to believe that he is exposed to a terrific storm, convey a very natural expression of terror. He regards the imaginary flashes of lightning with an aspect of dismay, which, if simulated, would be a very good specimen of acting. In many other experiments performed upon him, the effects seem to be such as are quite beyond the reach of any skepticism with regard to his sincerity. He can not pronounce his own name—does not know, or at least can not tell, the name of the town in which he lives—can not recognize one face in the room where scores of people, who know him very well, are now laughing at him. On the other side, we must state, that when a glass of water is given to him, and he is told that it is vinegar, he persists in saying that he tastes water, and nothing else. This is almost the only experiment that fails upon him.

B. is an intelligent man, over thirty years of age, of nervous temperament. His honesty and voracity are quite beyond all rational doubt. The numerous spectators, who have known him well for many years, are quite sure that if he has

* This article, taken from "*Chamber's Edinburg Journal*," is presented to our readers as unfolding an interesting subject for scientific inquiry, though not as an endorsement of the peculiar views which are therein expressed.

any will in the matter, it is to defeat the lecturer's purpose. However, after he has submitted himself to the process, the experiments made upon him prove successful. He is naturally a fluent talker, but now can not, without difficulty and stammering, pronounce his own name, an easy monosyllable—can not strike the lecturer's hand—can not rise from a chair, &c. We may add, that he can not be made to mistake water for vinegar.

One more case. C. is a tradesman, middle-aged, has no tendency to mysticism or imaginative reverie—knows nothing of "mesmerism" or "electro-biology"—was never suspected of falsehood or imposition. He proves, however, the most pliable of all the patients—the experiments succeed with him to the fullest extent—his imagination and his senses seem to be placed entirely under the control of the experimenter. Standing before a large audience, he is made to believe that he and the lecturer are alone in the room. He can not recognize his own wife, who sits before him. He can not step from the platform, which is about one foot higher than the floor. When informed that his limbs are too feeble to support him, he totters, and would fall if not held. Many of the experiments upon him, showing an extreme state of mental and physical prostration, are rather painful to witness, others are ludicrous; for instance, he is made to believe that he is out amid the snow in the depth of winter—he shivers with cold, buttons up his coat, stamps the floor with his feet, brushes away the imagined fast-falling flakes from his clothes, and almost imparts to the spectators a sympathetic feeling of cold by his wintry pantomime: then he is jocosely recommended not to stand thus shivering, but to make snow-balls and pelt the lecturer. Heartily, and with apparent earnestness, he acts according to orders. Next, he is made to believe that the room has no roof. "You see the sky and the stars, sir?" "Yes." "And there, see, the moon is rising, very large and red, is it not?" "Yes, sir." "Very well: now you see this cord in my hand; we will throw it over the moon, and pull her down." He addresses himself to the task with perfect gravity, pulls heartily. "Down she comes, sir! down she comes!" says the experimenter: "mind your head, sir!" and the deluded patient falls on the platform, as he imagines that the moon is coming down upon him.

These instances will be sufficient for our purpose. We have given them as being fair average examples of many others. If any reader still supposes that these effects have all been mere acting and falsehood, we must leave that reader to see and examine for himself as we have done. For other readers who admit the facts and want an explanation, we proceed to discuss the *modus operandi*.

In the first place, then, we assert that *there is no proof whatever* that these effects depend on any electric influence: there is absolutely no evidence that the metallic disk, as an electric agent, has any connection with the results. On this point, we invite the lecturers and experimenters who maintain that electricity is the agent in their process, to test the truth of our assertion, as they may very easily. *Ceteris paribus*—all the other usual conditions being observed, such as silence, the fixed gaze, monotony of attention—let the galvanic disk be put aside, and in its place let a sixpence or a fourpenny-piece be employed, or indeed any similar small object on which the eyes of the patient must remain fixed for the usual space of time, and we will promise that the experi-

ments thus made shall be equally successful with those in which the so-called galvanic disk is employed. The phenomena are physiological and not electrical.

Our conviction is, that the results proceed entirely from *imagination acting with a peculiar condition of the brain*, and that this peculiarly passive and impressible condition of the brain is induced by the *fixed gaze* upon the disk. These are the only agencies which we believe to be necessary in order to give us an explanation of the phenomena in question. In saying so, however, we are aware that such data will seem to some inquirers insufficient to account for the effects we have described. It may be said: "We know that imagination sometimes produces singular results, but can hardly see how it explains the facts stated." We have only to request that such inquirers, before they throw aside our explanation, will give attention to a few remarks we propose giving on the power of imagination in certain conditions. We propose:

1. To give some suggestions on this point;
2. To notice the relations of imagination with reason;
3. To inquire how far the physical means employed—the *fixed gaze on the disk*—may be sufficient to affect the mental organ, the brain, so as to alter its normal condition.

1. Our usual mode of speaking of imagination, is to treat it as the opposite of all reality. When we say, "That was merely an imagination," we dismiss the topic as not worthy of another thought. For all ordinary purposes, this mode of speaking is correct enough; but let us ask, Why is imagination so weak? why are its suggestions so evanescent? Simply because it is under the control of reason. But if the action of reason could be suspended, we should then see how great, and even formidable, is the imaginative power. It is the most untiring of all our mental faculties, refusing to be put to rest even during sleep; it can alter the influence of all external agents: for example, can either assist or prevent the effects of medicine—can make the world a prison-house to one man, and a paradise to another—can turn dwarfs into giants, and make various other metamorphoses more wonderful than any described by Ovid; nay, these are all insufficient examples of its power when left without control; for it can produce either health, or disease, or death!

To give a familiar instance of the control under which it is generally compelled to act: You are walking home in the night time, and some withered and broken old tree assumes, for a moment, the appearance of a giant about to make an attack upon you with an enormous club. You walk forward to confront the monster with perfect coolness. Why? Not because you are a Mr. Greatheart, accustomed to deal with giants, but because, in fact, the illusion does not keep possession of your mind even for a moment. Imagination merely suggests the false image; but memory and reason, with a rapidity of action which can not be described, instantly correct the mistake, and tell you it is only the old elm-tree; so that here, and in a thousand similar instances, there is really no sufficient time allowed for any display of the power of imagination.

A tale is told—we can not say on what authority—which, whether it be a fact or a fiction, is natural, and may serve very well to show what would be the effect of imagination if reason did not interfere. It is said that the companions of a young man who was very "wild," had foolishly resolved to try to frighten him into better conduct. For this purpose, one of the party was arrayed in a white sheet, with a lighted

lantern carried under it, and was to visit the young man a little after midnight, and address to him a solemn warning. The business, however, was rather dangerous, as the subject of this experiment generally slept with loaded pistols near him. Previously to the time fixed for the apparition, the bullets were abstracted from these weapons, leaving them charged only with gunpowder. When the specter stalked into the chamber, the youth immediately suspected a trick, and, presenting one of the pistols, said: "Take care of yourself; if you do not walk off, I shall fire!" Still stood the goblin, staring fixedly on the angry man. He fired; and when he saw the object still standing—when he believed that the bullet had innocuously passed through it; in other words, as soon as reason failed to explain it, and imagination prevailed—he fell back upon his pillow in extreme terror.

2. The point upon which we would insist is that, in the normal condition of the mind and the body, the power of imagination is so governed, that a display of the effect it produces while under the control of reason, can give us but a feeble notion of what its power might be in other circumstances. To make this plain, we add a few suggestions respecting the nature and extent of the control exercised by reason over imagination; and we shall next proceed to show, that *the activity of reason is dependent upon certain physical conditions.*

We shall say nothing of a metaphysical nature respecting reason, but shall simply point to two important facts connected with its exercise. The *first*—that it suspends or greatly modifies the action of other powers—has already been noticed in our remarks on imagination; but we must state it here in more distinct terms. We especially wish the reader to understand how wide and important is the meaning of the terms "control" and "overrule" as we use them when we say that "reason controls, or overrules, imagination." When we say that, in nature, the laws which regulate one stage of existence *overrule* the laws of another and a lower stage, we do not intend to say that the latter are annulled, but that they are so controlled and modified in their course of action, that they can no longer produce the effects which would take place if they were left free from such control. A few examples will make our meaning plain. Let us contrast the operations of chemistry with those of mechanism. In the latter, substances act upon each other simply by pressure, motion, friction, &c.; but in chemistry, affinities and combinations come into play, producing results far beyond any that are seen in mechanics. In the latter the trituration of two substances about equal in hardness should simply reduce them to powder; but in chemistry, it may produce a gaseous explosion. Again, vegetable life overrules chemistry: the leaves, twigs, and branches of a tree, if left without life, would, when exposed to the agencies of air, light, heat, and moisture, be partly reduced to dust and partly diffused as gas in the atmosphere. It is the vegetative life of the tree which controls both the mechanical and the chemical powers of wind, rain, heat, and gravitation; and it is not until the life is extinct that these inferior powers come into full play upon the tree. So, again, the animal functions control chemical laws—take digestion, for example; a vegetable cut up by the root and exposed to the air, passes through a course of chemical decomposition, and is finally converted into gas; but when an animal consumes a vegetable, it is not decomposed according to the chemical laws, but is digested, becomes chyle, and is assimilated to the body of the

animal. It is obvious that animal life controls mechanical laws. Thus, the friction of two inert substances wears one of them away—the soft yields to the hard; but, on the contrary, the hand of the laborer who wields the spade or the pickaxe becomes thicker and harder by friction.

The bearings of these remarks upon our present point will soon be obvious: we multiply examples, in order to show in what an important sense we use the word *control*, with regard to the relation of reason with imagination. As we have seen, chemistry overrules the mechanical laws; vegetation suspends the laws of chemistry; a superior department of animal life controls influences which are laws in a lower department; again, mind controls the effects of physical influences; and, lastly, one power of the mind controls, and in a great measure suspends, the natural activity of another power—*reason controls imagination.* A second fact with regard to the action of reason must be noticed—that *it requires a wakeful condition of the brain.* Some may suppose that they have reasoned very well during sleep; but we suspect that, if they could recollect their syllogisms, they would find them not much better than Mickle's poetry composed during sleep. Mickle, the translator of the *Lusaid*, sometimes expressed his regret that he could not remember the poetry which he improvised in his dreams, for he had a vague impression that it was very beautiful. "Well" said his wife, "I can at least give you two lines, which I heard you muttering over during one of your poetic dreams. Here they are—

'By Heaven! I'll wreak my woes
Upon the cowslip and the pale primrose!'

If we required proof that the operation of reason demands a wakeful and active condition of the brain, we might find it in the fact, that all intellectual efforts which imply sound reasoning are prevented even by a partial sleepiness or dreaminess. A light novel may be read and enjoyed while the mind is in an indolent and dreary state; music may be enjoyed, or even composed, in the same circumstances, because it is connected rather with the imaginative than with the logical faculty; but, not to mention any higher efforts, we can not play a game of chess well unless we are "wide awake."

Now we come to our point:—Supposing that, by any means, the brain can be deprived of that wakefulness and activity which it required for a free exercise of the reasoning powers, then what would be the effect on the imagination? For an answer to this query, we shall not refer to the phenomena of natural sleep and dreaming, because it is evident that the subjects of the experiments we have to explain are not in a state of natural sleep; we shall rather refer to the condition of the brain during what we may call "doziness," and also to the effects sometimes produced by disease on the imagination and the senses.

We all know that in a state of "doziness," any accidental or ridiculous image which happens to suggest itself, will remain in the mind much longer than in a wakeful condition. A few slight, shapeless marks on the ceiling will assume the form of a face or a full-length figure; and strange physiognomies will be found among the flowers on the bed-curtains. In the impressible and passive state of the brain left by any illness which produces nervous exhaustion, such imaginations often become very troublesome. Impressions made on the brain sometime ago, will now reappear. Jean Paul Richter cautions us not to tell frightful stories to children, for this reason—that, though the "horrible fancies" may all be soon for-

gotten by the healthful child, yet afterward, when some disease—a fever, for instance—has affected the brain and the nerves, all the dismissed goblins may too vividly reproduce themselves. Our experience can confirm the observation. Some years ago we went to a circus, where, during the equestrian performances, some trivial popular airs were played on brass instruments—cornets and trombones—dismally out of tune. Now, by long practice, we have acquired the art of utterly turning our attention away from bad music, so that it annoys us no more than the rumble of wheels in Fleet-street. We exercised this voluntary deafness on the occasion. But not long afterward, we were compelled, during an attack of disease which affected the nervous system to hear the whole discordant performance repeated again and again, with a pertinacity which was really very distressing. Such a case prepares us to give credit to a far more remarkable story, related in one of the works of Mackintosh. A clergyman, we are told, who was a skillful violinist, and frequently played over some favorite *solo* or *concerto*, was obliged to desist from practice on account of the dangerous illness of his servant-maid—if we remember truly, phrenitis was the disease. Of course, the violin was laid aside; but one day, the medical attendant, on going toward the chamber of his patient, was surprised to hear the violin solo performed in rather subdued tones. On examination, it was found that the girl, under the excitement of disease, had imitated the brilliant divisions and rapid passages of the music which had impressed her imagination during health! We might multiply instances of the singular effects of peculiar conditions of the brain upon the imaginative faculty. For one case we can give our personal testimony. A young man, naturally imaginative, but by no means of weak mind or credulous or superstitious, saw even in broad day light, specters or apparitions of persons far distant. After being accustomed to these visits, he regarded them without any fear, except on account of the derangement of health which they indicated. These visions were banished by a course of medical treatment. In men of great imaginative power, with whom reason is by no means deficient, phenomena sometimes occur almost as vivid as those of disease in other persons. Wordsworth, speaking of the impressions derived from certain external objects, says:

"on the mind
They lay like images, and seemed almost
To haunt the bodily sense!"

Again, in his verses recording his impression of the beauty of a bed of daffodils, he says:

"And oft, when on my couch I lie, [dozing?]
They flash before that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude."

These words are nothing more, we believe, than a simple and unexaggerated statement of a mental phenomenon.

Enough has now been said to show, that in a certain condition of the brain, when it is deprived of the wakefulness and activity necessary for the free use of reason, the effects of imagination may far exceed any that are displayed during a normal, waking state of the intellectual faculties. The question now remains: Are the means employed by the professors of electro-biology sufficient to produce that peculiar condition to which we refer? We believe that they are; and shall proceed to give reasons for such belief.

3. What are these means? or rather let us ask: "Amid the various means employed, which is the real agent?" We

observe that, in the different processes by which—under the names of electro-biology or mesmerism—a peculiar cerebral condition is induced, such means as the following are employed:—Fixed attention on one object—it may be a metallic disk said to have galvanic power, or a sixpence, or a cork; silence and a motionless state of the body are favorable to the intended result; monotonous movements by the experimenter, called "passes," may be used or not. The process may be interrupted by frequent winking, to relieve the eyes; by studying over some question or problem, or, if the patient is musical, by going through various pieces of music in his imagination; by anything, indeed, which tends to keep the mind wakeful. Now, when we find among the various means one invariably present, in some form or another—*monotony of attention producing a partial exhaustion of the nervous energy*—we have reason to believe that *this* is the real agent.

But how can the "fixed gaze upon the disk" affect reason? Certainly, it does not immediately affect reason; but through the nerves of the eye it very powerfully operates on the organ of reason, *the brain*, and induces an impressive, passive, and somnolent condition.

Such a process as the "fixed gaze on a small disk for about the space of a quarter of an hour," must not be dismissed as a trifle. It is supposed to be the natural wakeful action of the brain and the eye. Let it be observed that, in waking hours, the eye is continually in play, relieving itself, and guarding against weariness and exhaustion by unnumbered changes of direction. This is the case even during such an apparently monotonous use of the eye as we find in reading. As sleep approaches, the eye is turned upward, as we find it also in some cases of disease—hysteria, for example; but it should be noticed, that this position of the eye is naturally connected with a somnolent and dreaming condition of the brain. In several of the subjects of the so-called electro-biological experiments, we observed that the eyes were partially turned upward. It is curious to notice that this mode of acting on the brain is of very ancient date, at least among the Hindoos. In their old poem, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, it is recommended as a religious exercise, superior to prayer, almsgiving, attendance at temples, &c.; for the god Krishna, admitting that these actions are good, so far as they go, says: "*But he who, sitting apart, gazes fixedly on one object until he forgets home and kindred, himself, and all created things—he attains perfection.*" Not having at hand any version of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, we can not now give an exact translation of the passage; but we are quite sure that it recommends a state of stupefaction of the brain, induced by a long-continued fixed gaze upon one object.

We have now stated, 1. That such an act of long-fixed attention upon one object, has a very remarkable effect on the brain; 2. That in the cerebral condition thus induced, the mental powers are not free to maintain their normal relations to each other; especially, will, comparison, and judgment, appear to lose their requisite power and promptitude of action, and are thus made liable to be overruled by the suggestions of imagination or the commands of the experimenter.

To this explanation we can only add, that all who doubt it may easily put it to an experimental test. If it is thought that the mere "fixed gaze," without electric or galvanic agency, is not sufficient to produce the phenomena in question, then the only way of determining our dispute must be by fair experiment. But here we would add a word of serious car-

ion, as we regard the process as decidedly dangerous, especially if frequently repeated on one subject.

To conclude: we regard the exhibitions now so common under the name of electro-biology as delusions, so far as they are understood to have any connection with the facts of electricity; so far as they are *real*, we regard them as very remarkable instances of a mode of acting on the brain which is, we believe, likely to prove injurious. As we have no motive in writing but simply to elicit the truth, we will briefly notice two difficulties which seem to attend our theory. These are—1. The *rapid transition* from the state of illusion to an apparently wakeful and normal condition of mind. The patient who has been making snow-balls in a warm room, and has pulled the moon down, comes from the platform, recognizes his friends, and can laugh at the visions which to him seemed realities but a few minutes since. 2. The *apparently slight effects* left, in some cases, after the experiments. Among the subjects whom we have questioned on this point, one felt "rather dizzy" all the next day after submitting to the process; another felt "a pressure on the head;" but a third, who was one of the most successful cases, felt "no effect whatever" afterward; while a fourth thinks he derived "some benefit" to his health from the operation. We leave these points for further inquiry.

CONSEQUENCES OF COLD FEET.

"Life is warm; Death is cold."

If there be one subject that beyond all others demands the earnest attention of the American mother, that subject is the protection of the feet of her daughter from the cold and dampness of the pavement. We give it more than usual preëminence, because the evil is neither understood nor regarded in any other light than a remote contingency not worth a moment's thought, when compared to the gratification of making an impression on her admirers, by what she imagines a beautiful foot.

Physiologists have proved by actual experiment with the thermometer, that the central heat of the body, or that of the blood as it issues from its starting point the left ventricle of the heart, is 101 degrees; and that at the sole of the foot is not more than 99 degrees!

The great and unchangeable law of the Creator that develops life is warmth. The egg of the fowl only possesses latent life, till the warmth of the mother expands the germ, and gives the heart its first contractile or active force; without warmth it would never assume its organized form nor continue its action; this gives conclusive evidence of the truthfulness of our motto.

Before we speak of the influence of cold on the nerves of the feet, and its still less rapid effect on the circulation of the blood, through their action on the heart, let us consider the value of the great facts we have presented to the reader, viz: the natural decrease of the warmth of the blood in the vessels of the feet, as a probable means of permitting the ill-effect of cold on these great central organs of life, the lungs, if not prevented by art.

It is conceded by all intelligent observers, that a violent chill communicated to the body, is very soon and sensibly felt in the lungs, and that pleurisies and inflammation of the lungs themselves, are the frequent consequences of such ex-

posure. Now, it is known that heat or caloric has a tendency to equalize itself in all the various bodies in the universe; ice itself only melting by the inevitable necessity of imbibing heat, when exposed to it; according to this unchangeable law, it can only exist as ice during the summer months by interposing between the atmosphere and it, substances possessing a known power of repelling heat.—Thus it is preserved in ice-houses. When the earth is colder than the body, this law instantly begins to operate upon the feet standing upon it, and as the body is a producer of heat, its safety is secured precisely in proportion to the vigor of health it possesses, or in other words, the rapidity with which its blood circulates through the lungs. It therefore follows that the feebler the circulation, the more unable the body is to afford to part with its heat. If you clothe the body warmly, and thus prevent its warmth from transmission to the atmosphere, and interpose a cork sole between the sole of the foot and the earth, this transmission of heat is stopped, because cork, wool, silk and cotton are non-conductors of heat.

In a woman of ordinary size, there can be no reasonable doubt from the computation of physiologists, that half of her blood passes under her feet during the space of every two minutes at least! so that it will be seen the conducting power of the damp earth must continually deprive the blood of its warmth. The effect of cold upon the nerves is more rapid than this. It is known to most persons, that instantaneous sneezing is often produced by standing on the cold hearth-stone or oil-cloth, and the speedy action of cold feet on the bowels, is often painfully evident to many invalids. Assuming the body to be a producer of electricity (and it seems impossible to conclude otherwise,) that fluid is known to be subject to the same law as heat, i. e., to seek an instant equilibrium with surrounding objects. There can be no better conductor than the damp earth, all positively or negatively electrified bodies, not isolated or cut off by a non-conductor, seek an instant equilibrium. The law is well known to philosophers, and ought to be equally so to every intelligent and rational being, therefore it must be, that if heat and electricity be not the same thing, still the same danger must be incurred by too light clothing and shoes. Dr. James Murray has asserted, and he thinks proved, that cholera is rendered impossible by isolating the feet by cork soles, and feeding and clothing the body, so as to keep up a high degree of electricity. All experience has proved that those persons most afflicted during both the epidemics which occurred in this city, were those who endured the greatest exposure to dampness, and ate the most watery and ill-cooked food, and what is more conclusive, that they were mostly attacked towards morning, when the atmospheric pressure was lowest.

Moral and Intellectual Beauty.

Beauty consists not in the eye that sparkles, or the damask cheek and lip, a high forehead, or a graceful form, the glistening hair, or melody of voice! No—beauty is not there. But it may be found in the soul which displays at every glance affection's rays forever basking there,—speaking in soft tones of love in sunlight smile, which can beguile an aching heart from wo. That beauty dwelleth in majesty supreme, sweeter than music's voice, or the dreams of a seraph.

*Voices from the Spirit-land.***VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH.**

[GIVEN BY SPIRITS TO THE CIRCLE OF HOPE.]

I wandered through a dark valley, and it was called the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Dim and shadowy it appeared to many who were passing through it. Unlike the material things which the senses had seen and felt, appeared the misty future, while passing through this path of shadows. But at length the vale is passed, and the spirit enters into its new abode. It gazes around with looks of wonder and astonishment on the opening scene. It seems to have passed as through a troubled and indistinct dream, and to have suddenly awaked to perceive the unclouded reality of the objects by which it is surrounded. What warm and blissful emotions are now experienced! Looks of inquiry are directed to every quarter where the eye may reach; and the first thought—the first desire is—the presence of a kindred object—something moulded in the likeness of itself—to answer its aspirations.

Now the friends of that spirit approach to welcome it to its new abode—to joyfully embrace the long-expected companion. And now their hands are clasped in gentle and earnest affection; and they wander away—the spirits speaking to the stranger-spirit of the land which it is about to inhabit. See how many are approaching, and extending their hands in welcome, and smiling with looks of recognition! And as they proceed—a bright and happy group—they are met by others who pause to hold converse with them, and seem to give them instructions, and to point forward. Then their attention is next turned to themselves, and I see them comparing their own appearance with that of others,—not judging by the external garb, but by the light of the inner soul, which paints its character on every countenance. In comparing thus, certain differences are perceived. Some appear altogether more lovely than others; some seem filled with a joy which causes their countenances to be luminous and glowing, and others are earnestly laboring to attain to that interior brightness which makes those around them so lovely.

Then the stranger-spirit begins to retire within itself, and says: "Why do I appear so gross and so unfit to mingle in this society? Bright and beautiful beings are around me, but I am unable to approach them as closely as I wish. Can I be unworthy to mingle with them?—is my form incapable of becoming as beautiful as theirs, which shed a soft and yellow luster wherever they move? I look within, and my heart asks for something more to satisfy, than my anxious gaze on the beauty which surrounds others but warms not me." So naturally turns that spirit for instruction, that he may become in truth a citizen of that beautiful

country. And I see now those brighter beings smile and converse with each other; and they say, "His eyes have been opened; he feels the need of the refining influences of the spirits' breathing—of light within his soul." Again, they say, "He is studying himself as he is; he is taking the first lesson of spiritual experience—he is beginning to learn the wisdom of the sphere which he now inhabits."

Now I see that spirit engaged in a searching scrutiny. He gazes back on his former life and teachings, and is astonished to behold them as a book wherein was written much that was dark and dim, and which now seems merely as a shadow without a reality. And his former life appears as a stream whose course was here and there lighted up by the rays of the sun, but which anon led through a dark and shadowy vale. He now wonders and inquires why the things which are beginning to appear so plain, should have appeared to him so dim on earth; and thus the bright beings that surround him answer:

"The history of men and things were given in the past according to the state of human development. So far as the minds of men were unfolded to perceive the laws of the inner world, they gave forth that knowledge to others. Some were gifted with a spirit of prophecy to an extent adapted to the wants of the age in which they lived. Some were inspired to speak words of truth and wisdom, such as were needed by the hearers who listened to their teachings. Some were made natural physicians, and cured diseases by the laying on of hands; and others were sent forth as reformers and heralds of the coming day, and the hearts of the people were shaken with the strength of the spirit. And behold a lovely child was born of lowly parents, and a manger received the infant form. Glorious spirits watched its slumbers, as it rested in innocence and beauty. Beautiful and harmonious in its structure was the new-born spirit; and being ever surrounded and strengthened by a holy influence, the child waxed strong in virtue and pure in character. Sublime was the power and sweet was the aroma of the light emanating from the spiritual world, lifting him far above the influences of the earthly sphere. Therefore did he go forth to the world as an instrument of truth and life-giving wisdom, as an angel of peace to his brethren, and as a physician to the afflicted. And now in this holy and divine abode, the ocean of love, which once rolled through his uplifted soul will swell into a still wider expanse, and streams from this ocean will flow down to the human world, that the children of earth may feel and know that he is indeed their brother. Thus shall the kingdom of God be established on the earth; thus shall the might and majesty of Love be known, and thus shall the world that has lingered long in darkness be bathed in the floods of heavenly radiance."

Thus spake the bright spirits to the stranger-spirit ; and when the first pages of the book of eternal wisdom were thus unfolded, and the harmonious blending of the heavenly with the earthly sphere was revealed, it was seen that the valley of the shadow of death is but the pathway through which the spirit enters into the courts of the celestial temples, where the voice of wisdom—revealing the past and the future—is ever whispering to the brightening soul.

SPIRITUALISM--WHAT IS IT?

MR. EDITOR : The following communication was addressed to me, as a medium, and is personal ; but I have thought it might cheer others who are laboring in this not yet popular cause, and who are liable to feel discouraged in view of the persecution to which we must all be exposed from those who can not go with us.

M. B. RANDALL.

Many and various are the answers to this question, which spirits read in the minds of their brothers of Earth. One answers "the Rappings," another "Modern Manifestations," and the last definition is subject to as many meanings as there are varieties in the experience of those who answer thus. But who among you comprehends the term? What is SPIRIT? Is it not the soul—the Essence—the REAL—in everything in the Universe of God? What then is Spirit-ism but a knowledge of the whole Universe—the great ocean of all knowledge? I hear you exclaim, "What a field!" Ah, you little know how vast this field is.

Daily does your unfolding vision stretch deeper and deeper into the mist which surrounds man, and yet could you believe how little the wisest of earth's children can see, compared with what is still unseen, you would be completely overwhelmed and drowned in amazement.

Your thirsting spirit hath a piercing eye, and yet how soon is it lost in doubt and uncertainty as it gazes toward the Infinite? But gaze on—this is the true path to wisdom; be not discouraged, but rather rejoice that there will be more truth for you to learn every day throughout eternity. Yes, Spiritualism is lasting as eternity, broad as immensity, and glorious as Infinity! Then grasp on, seek ever, but make yourself happy in the new truth of to-day, and do not murmur that you can not get along faster. It is a great law of your nature that truth shall be presented as fast as your unfolding spirit can grasp it with profit.

Infinity—Eternity—Immensity—who does not use these terms with impunity; and who among you all, and I may say who among us all comprehends either of them? Seek not, then, so ardently to fathom the future as to destroy your present peace; but read more thoroughly the present, thereby preparing yourself for the enjoyment of the MORROW when it shall have be-

come TO-DAY. Reach as you will, you can never reach the future; you must ever be in the present. Then open your soul to the light of the present truth, that it may be thereby warmed, nourished, unfolded and expanded to the extent of its capacity, that its broad spreading petals may catch the largest possible amount from the life-giving rays of the morrow's sun. Truth—truth alone can light the soul through eternity. Without this it is but a cheerless iceberg during a polar night. No drop of love or sympathy can be forced from its frozen bosom, and the warmest heart is chilled by its approach. But pour the genial rays of this Sun upon its hardened breast, and soon the stern form is humbled, and tears of love and sympathy and gratitude will pour in torrents from its softening fountains.

Let this lesson sink deep into thy soul, and strengthen thee in all thy efforts to cheer and warm OUR BROTHERS, by the beautiful visions it has been given thee to understand. When thou dost approach a proud, cold, selfish brother, compare him to a block of ice, and know that there is no pure and living water in his soul, but that his destiny has cast him upon an ice-bound coast; do not pour out the sweet waters of thy living spirit upon his frost-bound surface, lest thine own soul be frozen thereby; but stand firmly by, and, if possible, reflect that piercing ray of truth upon his hardened heart, in full confidence that this alone can melt his cold form. * * * Thine own, SPIRIT HELPER
—[*Light from the Spirit-world.*]

Trust in God.

JOHN M. SPEAR, MEDIUM.

There is nothing better, and certainly nothing more useful to the inhabitants of your earth, than an unwavering trust in Him who made all things. The past, the present, and the future, are all by Him distinctly known, and clearly perceived. Events are all linked together—not one of these links can be severed. The first event is connected with the last. They form a beautiful and harmonious whole. There is nothing so small, that it is not connected with some other thing; and that second thing is connected with a third; and thus
"Events in order flow."

He who hath made all things is the Controller of all that He hath made. There is nothing so small, or so large, that it is beyond his direction. Even the dark and somewhat mysterious events are not overlooked; and they too are embraced in the vast and universal plan. The sicknesses, sorrows, and disappointments, are not excluded. They contribute to make up the vast whole. He who leans on the breast of the eternal and paternal Spirit rests securely. No rude winds, no startling earthquakes can disturb him. His trust is in the wise and beneficent direction of Him who orders all events in Infinite Wisdom, unchanging and universal Goodness.—[*New Era.*]

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

R. P. AMBLER, EDITOR.

NEW-YORK, JANUARY 15, 1853.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

It is a subject of pleasing reflection, that the sentiment of religious freedom is rapidly diffusing itself through the minds and hearts of the people in this country. With the expansion and enlightenment of the human soul, which are the result of a natural and progressive development, the shackles of authority are falling from the minds of the multitude, and they are beginning to roam forth into the bright fields of Nature, to grasp the realities of the interior life. It is a joyous thought that the gloomy prisons of mythological error are dissolving beneath a new-born light, and that the galling fetters imposed by sects and creeds are being weakened and broken by the breath of angels. Long and doleful has been the night in which humanity has slumbered; cheerless and repulsive have been the temples of superstition and ignorance in which the struggling soul has been confined; but sweetly dawns the rising Sun of spiritual freedom in the horizon of human destiny, and its rays are resting now on the bosom of humanity, even as the smile of God. Men are beginning to realize the dark and bitter bondage which they have silently endured; they are becoming sensible of their own individual rights and privileges, which have been denied by priests, and popes, and kings. They are being awakened to a sense of the dignity that is impressed upon the soul, and to the force of the obligation that rests on every member of the race to maintain the proper and righteous exercise of his own spiritual powers. And the consequence of this growing tendency of the human mind to an unlimited expansion of thought, has been manifested in the rapid diffusion of new theories and sublime truths, which are at variance with the dark conceptions of the past, and in the crumbling and dissolution of ancient institutions which could flourish only amid the darkness of mythological eras. The time has now arrived when the thoughts of the soul, like a long pent-up stream, will break through the barriers which have been placed in their course, and will flow on with mighty and irresistible power over the wastes of earthly ignorance and error. It is thus that, in accordance with an ancient prophecy, the very wilderness shall be made glad, and the earth shall be brightened with its millennial glory.

Hitherto the right of thought and speech has been apparently vested in a few. At least a certain chosen number have been appointed to think, and preach, and pray for the multitude. The ministers of the sanctuary, clothed in a priestly robe and placing before them the cherished book which they affirm to be the word of God,

have authoritatively dictated to the people what they must and must not believe; and tyrants seated upon their regal thrones and swaying the scepter of kingly power, have dared to usurp the right of private judgment and force opinions which are repulsive to every principle of reason. But by what authority have some men thus ruled over the consciences of others?—by what authority has Truth been gagged by arbitrary power and the voice of Freedom silenced? The right which is possessed or claimed by one individual, must belong equally to all; for the race is created in one common image, and the likeness of the Divinity is enstamped on every human soul. When left free and unrestrained, the mind will be naturally attracted to the truth it is prepared to receive, and it is only by this principle that it can ever be truly enlightened. Vain is the attempt to force opinions on the mind by an arbitrary authority,—the soul from its deepest heart will rebel against such a repulsive act, and though the lips may be closed and the knee bent at the footstool of the oppressor, the smothered thought will still arise to assert its claims. Spiritual despotism with all its marshalled host, can never bring one soul to a knowledge of the truth, for truth is found only in the atmosphere of freedom and can be seen alone by the light of the inner sanctuary. Therefore is the principle of religious freedom destined to prevail over all the oppressive power of spiritual tyrants, while the authority of old creeds and systems which were born and nourished in the gloom of the past, must pass away at the approach of heaven-born Truth.

It is well, however, that the principle of freedom should have a general application to the human mind, and be recognized as the divine birthright of every individual. In claiming the privileges of religious liberty for themselves, men are sometimes inclined to deny the same privileges to others. The history of our puritan forefathers, who fled from their native country to enjoy liberty of conscience and then in turn persecuted those who differed in opinion from themselves, furnishes evidence of the fact that selfishness and proscriptive authority will sometimes blind the eyes and misguide the actions of those very individuals who have themselves sought refuge from these same evils. An inconsistency of this nature has recently occurred in a manifestation of popular feeling, to which we may briefly advert. As is now generally known, a large and enthusiastic meeting has been lately held in this city by the friends of religious freedom, "for the purpose of expressing the feelings of the Christian public in regard to the inhuman treatment of the Madii and others, now imprisoned in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany for possessing and reading the Holy Scriptures." From the report of this meeting we find that a profound sentiment of sympathy prevailed in behalf of the individuals who have been thus unrighteously oppressed, and that in the speeches and resolutions offered on this occasion, there was

manifested a hearty enthusiasm in favor of religious liberty. All this is *well*: But it may be suggested, while the spirit of freedom is invoked, whether it would not be well also to manifest a small share of sympathy for the thousands among the inhabitants of this country, who are debarred by human laws from enjoying the blessings of mental as well as physical liberty. In the *New Orleans Picayune* of 16th Aug., 1851, we find the following extract which will serve to illustrate the inconsistency here referred to:—

“Chauncy B. Blake was brought before Recorder Baldwin, charged with tampering with slaves. It was proved that he was seen conversing with a number of them in the street; that he asked them if they could read and write, and *if they would like to have a Bible*. This was the amount of the testimony against him. In *palliation* of his conduct, it was shown that he was a regular appointed agent of the Bible Society in New-Orleans, to distribute the Bible to such as would accept it. *The Society, however disclaimed having the most distant intention of giving the Scriptures to Slaves*, and it was said Blake had exceeded his commission in offering it. But, as it appeared to be a misunderstanding on his part, and not intentional interference, he was discharged with a caution, *not to repeat his offense*.”

But to bring this matter still nearer home, have we not reason to suppose that the very Reverend gentlemen who talked so earnestly in favor of religious freedom at Metropolitan Hall, would, if they possessed the power, utterly forbid and suppress all investigation of the truths connected with the spiritual manifestations? They are truly great champions of freedom when their cherished Bible is under the ban of a foreign power, because the fact appeals directly to their selfish interests; but when phenomena occur, and principles are presented, which are at variance with the authority of their book, they would stamp them under-foot as a viper in their path. This is the same spirit which has been recently manifested in the recommendation made to the Grand Jury of this city, to take measures for the suppression of spiritual circles; and there is sufficient evidence to believe that, under the influence of a selfish policy, the very ministers of law and religion who should be the guardians of popular liberty, would be pleased to crush the thoughts and opinions which may be the result of spiritual phenomena. O Freedom! while thy voice is hushed in the temple of religion, and echoes not in the halls of earthly justice, let it fall as the whisper of angels on the heart of humanity, and bless the nations with its thrilling tone! R. P. A.

Lectures on Spiritualism.

The second lecture of Mr. Fishbough's course, will be delivered next Monday evening at 7 1-2 o'clock in Friendship Hall, 149 West 16th st., between 7th and 8th Avenues. Subject: *Spiritual Manifestations from the times of Cotton Mather down to the present day*. Admittance FREE, and a collection taken.

SPIRITUALISM AND INSANITY.

Considerable excitement has been created in this city by the suicide of an individual whose name is Langdon, and the verdict of the coroner's jury with regard to the cause of his death. In this verdict it is assumed that the individual referred to was rendered insane by his attention to spiritual phenomena, and that it was under an excitement of mind proceeding from this cause that he laid violent hands upon himself. It appears, however, by a more careful investigation of the evidence in this case than was consistent with the selfish ends to be attained, that the cause of the mental disturbance which led to the act of suicide, was not primarily what is above stated and what was at first supposed. The following article published in the "*Tribune*" and apparently endorsed by the editor, presents some important facts in the case referred to, as well as some valuable suggestions, which we would commend to the attention of the Grand Jury:—

THE SPIRITS AND GRAND JURIES.

EDITOR OF TRIBUNE:—In this morning's *Tribune* I notice a detailed account of the death, by suicide, of Matthew Langdon, and the verdict of the coroner's jury; also their *recommendation* that the grand jury take means to suppress circles mentioned by the witnesses in that case. Now, from the names attached to that verdict, I have no doubt of their profound legal knowledge, and intelligence upon the subject on which they recommend action. The places named were by no means all the circles which the unfortunate man had attended in this city. Why should the more distinguished men, at whose houses circles have been held, be passed by and the comparatively obscure individuals mentioned as peculiarly obnoxious? What means do they propose the Grand Jury shall take to "suppress" these "circles?" I apprehend that such Juries will need particular instruction on this point, as the invasion of private houses is rather a delicate matter, without some evidence of criminality. The attempt is made in this case to connect the persons called "mediums" at these circles, nay, the whole circles, with some degree of criminality for the effect of certain phenomena on this man's mind, producing monomania. The testimony of the wife discloses the fact that, about ten months since, the deceased lost a daughter, which affected him very much, and all the testimony shows that *this* was an inciting cause of monomania behind or beyond the circles. Dr. Elliott says also that the man stated that he had frequently been subject to fits of despondency, (for how long he did not state,) and tempted to take his own life. If the Jury had investigated still further back, they might have discovered an inciting cause to nervous irritability before modern Spiritualism was known.

Such wise Juries do not seem to see where this precedent is leading them. Love has made men and women monomaniacs and suicides. Shall Grand Juries, therefore, "suppress" all meetings of lovers? I am acquainted with a case where a man, from reading the Bible, became impressed with the idea that he had "sinned away the day of grace" and became a raving maniac. Shall Grand Juries be instructed to collect and burn all Bibles? You doubtless re-

member the case of a woman in Pennsylvania, a few years since, who from a constant attendance on a protracted meeting, got the same idea, and for fear her children would do so, killed three of them and then committed suicide. Shall protracted meetings and preaching, therefore, be suppressed? Our insane asylum reports *always* have a number put down as caused by "religious excitement," shall religion, therefore, be abrogated? The study of the sciences, of new inventions, &c., has made many monomaniacs. Shall not our Juries be called upon to "suppress" all the sciences, or whatever is the cause of insanity, or, as in this case monomania? If I mistake not, this is not the first exhibition of that peculiar organization in the deceased, that becomes unbalanced at the least excitement.

In regard to the phenomena called "Spiritual," I am well satisfied that many of the grotesque gesticulations, mutterings and ridiculous movements which are claimed as spiritual, are no more such than they are the effect of the wind that blows. They are many times the effect of a self-biology, often running to fanaticism, ranting and monomania, from which the true spiritualist turns with disgust and regret. But these things are *always* exhibited by persons who have been tending to fanaticism and generally have previously, in some degree, been religious monomaniacs.

The writer of this has been in the constant habit of meeting "circles" and reading papers not only for ten months, but for five years, and while he has no idea of *going up* to reach the sublime fog of the *Mountain Cove Journal*, he does not expect to descend to the Coroner's Jury, or Grand Jury, for protection against that fanaticism which is the constant attendant of certain temperaments and organizations.

Since writing the above, I have received satisfactory evidence that the unfortunate man above noticed, had, for many years, been subject to exhibitions of monomania, and that he himself declared he had been an inmate of the almshouse. It seems to have been hereditary with him. So much for the *cause* of insanity. E. W. C.

Before blindly attributing the effects of insanity and suicide to the agency of spiritual manifestations, it would be well for the rational mind to investigate the subject itself and determine from its intrinsic nature the influence which it is likely to exert. When the doctrine is proclaimed in the Churches that the spirit departs to a country from which no traveler ever returns—when thus a veil of doubt and uncertainty is thrown over the realities of the future, and the bereaved mourner is led to imagine that the child, wife, or husband has gone to an abode of darkness and misery where they must remain through eternal ages, this is all perfectly right, evangelical and proper; and though the very idea which is insisted upon by theological divines may wither the fairest buds of beauty, chill the heart with dark despair, and even cast Reason from its throne, there is no Grand Jury to "suppress" the meetings where such doctrines are taught and such effects produced. We advise the clergy and jurists of this city and elsewhere to look to the influence exerted by their own theological dogmas, before they proceed too hastily to condemn and suppress those phenomena of which they are not prepared to form any righteous judgment.

THE MECHANICAL CONSCIENCE.

[The following article, with the above title, we find in the *Boston True Flag*, a large and beautiful sheet, under the Editorial charge of a gentleman whom we admire, without a personal acquaintance, for his boldness and independence of thought.]

It is not easy for selfish men to be always conscientious. Chances for good bargains or temptations to pleasure will sway their feeble sense of duty. When, by a delicately insinuated misrepresentation, without direct falsehood, our good deacon can make five or ten dollars on a horse trade, he is generally apt to do it.

But the deacon has a holy fear of the "pit which is called bottomless," and he would not really like to risk the probability of sliding therein from the verge of life, for any consideration. It would be unpleasant for him to think that each little step he takes aside from the straight path of justice, were carrying him nearer the dreaded place—to know that the slight robes of hypocrisy he sometimes wears, have a tendency, in the long run, to make him resemble dangerously one of those parabolical goats, which are to enjoy an unenviable distinction from the favored sheep, on a certain Great Day.

Therefore, since the worthy man does not love justice for the sake of justice; since he desires to be only so far good as the safety of his soul requires him to be; since his love of earth is equalled only by his fear of hell, he wisely resolves to make a compromise between duty and passion: and this is the way he does it.

He is shy about questioning his conscience too closely in matters of temporal profit. He recollects that he thus lost two or three capital chances of trade, when he first "experienced religion," conscience then being tender. It is perilous, on the other hand, to listen to the dictates of selfishness, without qualification. In this unhappy condition, he makes unto himself a mechanical conscience, to be a safe and unfailing guide to his soul. It is as exact as clockwork, and the deacon goes to church every Sunday, to have it properly wound up, to run during the week. Besides, he lubricates its machinery every day, by a formal prayer, repeated, parrot-like, from memory, and by a chapter in the Bible, read after breakfast, or at bed-time.

This ingenious piece of mechanism one would consider difficult to be framed and put together. Not at all. You have a nice and convenient pattern to go by. The clauses of your creed furnish all the materials. Believe in the Trinity, in Redemption, in the necessity of faith, and fear hell, and so forth, and so forth; adhere to the formalities of your religion, as drowning men cling to straws, with hopes of being thereby saved; study the bare letter of the law, and let the spirit go to the devil, who is very glad to get it and keep it out of your devotions; in short, follow all the customs and

observances of your church, love your neighbor as yourself—or as nearly so as is convenient ; do unto others as you would have them do to you, provided you were as foolish as they, and couldn't help yourself any better ; —and your mechanical conscience is perfect. Tie it under your arms, in place of bladders, and you can swim across the sea of this earth's troubles admirably, and finally float upon a good tide to the golden shores of a future paradise—of course.

For such men as the deacon, the mechanical conscience is invaluable. Beneath it they can crush and smother the interior conscience, as any little flower may be blighted and killed by a close dark box placed over it, to protect it. Selfishness can conform to rules of benevolence, and yet be not truly benevolent ; and Satan can be as devout as a Fire-worshiper or a Mohammedan, nor yet cease to be Satan.

Why do not all men who believe in future rewards and punishments, and who have interest enough in this world to make the thing worth their while, knock together one of these mechanical consciences ? We know some amiable church-members—and as many such out of the church as in it—who are foolish enough to adhere to the spirit of the Word, without so much regard to the mere letter ; who follow the dictates of the still, small voice, which gives them inward peace, indeed, but is rather a drawback to the accumulation of wealth ; who love and reverence the ineffable goodness of the Infinite, even more than they fear his wrath ; who would sacrifice all outward possessions, yea life itself, if need be, for their fellow men, out of pure love ; who enjoy the high happiness which true, interior religion gives, and imagine that silver, gold, and diamonds, power, honor, and glory, are of less value.

In conclusion, we would allude to certain reformers, men of progress and enlightenment, who judge lifeless creed and mechanical conscience by the standard of Reason. They believe more in good works, than in pious forms. They make love, and not fear, the foundation of religion. They uproot the good old, comfortable superstitions, which have been in the churches since the dark ages, and without which some of them can not stand. Of course it is the duty of all good old fogies to oppose these men. Put 'em down.

THE REIGN OF MAMMON.

Truly Mammon reigns. With scepter strong and mighty, he rules the hearts and consciences of men. All grades and classes are the subjects of this powerful monarch, and most obsequiously will even the proudest bend to catch his smile. One would be naturally led to suppose, from external appearances, that some in worshiping Mammon had forgotten God ; but it appears that the last duty is performed in the erection of costly temples and the preaching of silvery sermons,

and thus God and Mammon are worshiped together. We are pleased with the accompanying remarks on the above subject contained in the *Mountain Cove Journal*, and so we present them to our readers.

While the Earth is universally ceded to Mammon, he uses it as a battle-field against God, and covers it with the enginery of infernal spheres. He keeps the gates of the temples of Authority, and makes the path that leads to honor, dignity and station so vile, that depravity crowds it with her minions, and Religion bleeds, and Character is polluted, and Truth expires.

He sits in the gates of the halls of Commerce, and exacts tribute of those who go thereby. He dictates the maxims of Trade, and they are all summed up in this : Thou shalt act in thy dealings with thy neighbor with one object,—to acquire all thou canst, and to give as little as thou canst, that he may fall and thou mayest rise upon his ruin. Thus the other law—Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself—is disallowed ; and the daily bread of man is won through daily battle, from which few come off with clean hands and with a pure heart.

He sits in the pew with the assembly on the day of worship, and if one come in with a gold ring and goodly apparel, he says, Friend, come up higher ; but if the widow or the orphan enter, or if the poor man intrude upon his domain, he says, These pews are private property ; but yonder in the corner is the charity-seat for those who are too poor to buy the privilege of the preached Word. He watches the words of devotion lest they shall be his censure, and the sermon lest it shall offend his pride or make war upon his empire. He holds in his right hand the bribe for tinselled rhetoric, and he conceals a dagger for that heart which says to the Usurper, the Fraudulent Exactor, Thou art the man, and unless thy righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, thou shalt in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

Thus Mammon is the Universal Ruler, and by virtue thereof the *Universal Educator*. Man is educated by law, custom, habit. So fully does Mammon preoccupy the mind that the tares choke the wheat. The seeds of evil take broad and deep root, and send up vast and massive trunks, and put forth far-extended and densely-interwoven branches, until the holy plants of Truth, that love the sunlight and the dew, and that thrive only as they have free access to heaven, perish. The thick and matted vegetation of selfishness alone endures. The insane thoughts and passions of evil coil and breed, like serpents, in the dark and miasmatic shade. The human heart, made to be the bosom cell of each pure and holy affection, and to put forth the immortal blossoms of universal truth, honor, virtue, religion and philanthropy, is thus transformed, or rather deformed, into the abode of every imaginable shape of hate, sensuality and cruelty.

Facts and Phenomena.

RAPIDITY OF THOUGHT IN DREAMS.

While reading, in the November number of the *National*, an article entitled "Rapidity of Thought in Dreaming," I was reminded of a dream of my own, two or three summers ago, which made a strong impression upon me at the time, and which may serve further to illustrate the subject.

On a very warm afternoon, I was sitting in a somewhat lazy posture, listening to a friend, who was reading the *Christian Advocate and Journal*. As he commenced the obituary of a deceased preacher, I became drowsy, and, although I felt considerably interested in the article, soon fell asleep and dreamed.

I thought I was standing by the bedside of the sick man, watching the progress of his disease, while a number of anxious friends sat in different parts of the room, or hung quietly over the bed. In the course of what seemed to me five or six hours, death came and released the sufferer, amid the sobbings and prayers of afflicted relatives. I remained with the family a day or two, until the funeral. The assemblage on that occasion was large, and the services were long and impressive. The funeral sermon, which was preached in the house, appeared to me to be nearly an hour in length. I listened to it with great interest, and shall never forget the solemn impression it made upon my mind. After this, a procession of carriages was formed, and the deceased preacher was borne a distance of some ten or twelve miles to his grave. He was buried at the side of a large, plain, old-fashioned brick church, which stood near the corner of two streets. Here the funeral service was read, and, after seeing the grave filled up, the company slowly departed. I lingered behind, to indulge in the serious reflections that had been excited in me by the mournful occasion. I very well recollect standing in front of the church, at some little distance, and remarking to myself that, in case a monument should be erected over the remains, it would not look well, unless there should also be one on the other side of the church, to correspond with it. After this reflection, I turned to leave the spot, and suddenly awoke. You may judge of my surprise when I found my friend still reading the obituary, and that he had read but about two lines of it during my sleep.

To this allow me to add a circumstance related to me by a Methodist minister, a few years ago. The conference appointments of the preachers had just been read off in the evening, and on the way to his lodgings the preacher had stopped at a watchmaker's to purchase an alarm-watch. Before going to bed, as he had to start very early, he set his watch so as to awake him in good season in the morning. On falling asleep he dreamed that he was in the conference room. The

general business of the session had closed, and the preachers were sitting quietly in their places, while a large number of spectators, from the different churches, crowded around, in order to hear the appointments read by the bishop. The venerable man—it was Bishop Hedding—arose amid the most profound silence, and commenced the usual address to the preachers. This continued for some time. A hymn was then sung, in which all present appeared to join, and the closing prayer of the session was made. After this the bishop rose leisurely, took up his list, and commenced reading the appointments. Not another sound was heard in all that crowded assembly, until the name of the preacher, who was to fill a certain city appointment, was announced. Immediately there was a low murmur of dissatisfaction among the crowd, which increased by degrees, until it became noisy and violent. Confusion prevailed; the proceedings terminated in an uproar, and the preacher woke up in alarm. His faithful watch was ringing in his ears, like a dozen fire bells.

Do not these facts, Mr. Editor, and those mentioned in the article referred to, prove these two things,—firstly, that dreams do not occur in profound sleep; and, secondly, that they do always occur while the dreamer is in the act of waking?—[*Nat. Magazine*.

Spiritual Manifestation.

The inmates of the house of Mr. Samuel Seward, of this place, have been for the past two or three weeks continually annoyed by what some persons denominated departed spirits. We are not sufficiently acquainted with the subject of spirit knockings to write an article upon it, and will, therefore, only give the facts as they really occurred, and let our readers form their own conclusion. The first thing that led the family to suppose that something more than human agency was at work in their dwelling, was the strange appearance of the furniture—being removed from its proper place, and piled up in the middle of the floor. This singular movement of the furniture occurred three times, the last of which the principle part was found against the door, the only entrance into the room. Since writing the above, some of the most singular manifestations have been made that are on record, and had we not the evidence of Rev. James Jones, a man well and favorably known throughout the State, we would fear to relate them. A large dining table was turned completely upside down without any one touching or going near it, causing considerable damage to the piece of furniture. A chair was set in the middle of the floor, and no sooner was it placed in that position than it was turned topsy-turvy. Pillows were drawn, as if by magic, from the bed and thrown into the middle of the floor. While the family were seated around the table at dinner, the largest plates upon the table took to themselves wings

and flew into the middle of the floor. This seems an incredible story, but it is nevertheless true, and the half has not been told. We have always regarded these spiritual manifestations as a great imposition, but we must confess that this entirely transcends comprehension. It is worthy of remark that when the old war-worn veteran of the cross requested of the company to join him in prayer, and when he became engaged and faith was in lively exercise, the spirit departed, and troubled them no more that evening.—[*Rising Sun (Indiana) Republican*.]

Poetry.

INTERIOR LIFE.

BY T. L. HARRIS.

Inspired in forms of mental flame
Too pure for mortal sight to see,
Celestial angels yet remain,
Thou darkened Earth, with thee.

All forms that people earth and air,
All forms within the heaven's bright span,
Creative light and love declare,
And utter speech to man.

The dust beneath our feet ascends,
Attracted by superior law,
And nature suppliant serves the ends
Of wonder and of awe.

An inward pulse beats calm and still
Throughout the universal frame;
And a Divine creative will
Moves forth in cloud and flame.

A Providence that works by laws,
And moves in troops of circling suns,
Obedient to the spirit cause,
Through life harmonious runs.

A Providence that works by love,
And moves in circling angel bands,
Descends in Wisdom from above,
And every where expands.

And mystery folds each inward form
From outward sense and outward sight:
We never know whence comes the morn
That bathes the mind with light.

To read the word of Time aright,
To read the Truth its light imparts,
Is not the skill of outward might,
Or work of magic arts.

The heart, the mind, the soul, the sense,
Tha being born of Love Divine,
Alone can penetrate the dense
And awful Night of Time.

To such, like mist that melts in day
When morning gilds the orient skies,
All outward seemings pass away,
And beauty fills their eyes.

And every where they find a trace
Of ancient paths by angels trod,
And upward run the glorious race
Through Paradise to God.

[*Mountain Cove Journal*.]

Miscellaneous Department.

FRAGMENTS FROM A YOUNG WIFE'S DIARY.

I have been married seven weeks. * * * I do not rave in girlish fashion about my perfect happiness—I do not even say I love my husband. Such words imply a separate existence—a gift consciously bestowed on one being from another. I do not feel thus; my husband is to me as my own soul.

Long, very long, it is since I first knew this. Gradually, not suddenly, the great mystery of love overshadowed me, until at last I found out the truth, that I was my own no more. All the world's beauty I saw through his eyes—all the world's goodness and greatness came reflected through his noble heart. In his presence I was a child; I forgot myself, my own existence, hopes and aims. Everywhere—at all times and all places—his power was upon me. He seemed to absorb and inhale my whole soul into his, until I became like a cloud melting away in sunshine, and vanishing from the face of heaven.

All this reads very wild and mad; but, oh! Laurence—Laurence! none would marvel at it who had once looked on thee! Not that he is a perfect Apollo—this worshipped husband of mine; you may meet a score far handsomer; But who cares? Not I! All that is grand, all that is beautiful, all that shines out from the godlike soul—I see in my Laurence. His eyes soft, yet proud his wavy hair—his hand that I sit and clasp—his strong arm that I lean on—all compose an image wherein I see no flaw. Nay, I could scarcely believe in any beauty that bore no likeness to Laurence.

Thus is my husband; what am I? His wife—and no more. Every thing in me is only a reflection of him. Sometimes I even marvel that he loved me, so unworthy as I seem; yet when heaven rained on me the rich blessing of his love, my thirsty soul drank it in, and I felt that had it never come, for lack of it I must have died. I did almost die, for the joy was long in coming. Though, as I now know, he loved me well and dearly; yet for some reason or other he would not tell me so. The veil might never have fallen from our hearts, save for one-blessed chance. I will relate it. I love to dream over that brief hour, to which my whole existence can never show a parallel.

We were all walking together—my sisters, Laurence Sheldermine and I—when there came on an August thunderstorm. Our danger was great, for we were in the midst of a wood. My sisters fled; but I, being weak and ill—alas, my heart was breaking quietly, though he knew it not—I had no strength to fly. He was too kind to forsake me; so we staid in an open space of the wood, I clinging to his arm, and thinking—God forgive me—that if I could only die then, close to him, encompassed by his gentle care, it would be so happy; happier far than my life was then. What he thought, I knew not. He spoke in hurried, broken words, and turned his face from me all the while.

It grew dark, like night, and there came flash after flash, peal after peal. I could not stand—I leaned against his arm. At last there shone all around us a frightful glare, as if the whole wood were in flames—a crash of boughs, a roar above, as though the heavens were falling; then, silence.

Death had passed close by us, and smote us not; and Death was the precursor of Love.

We looked at one another, Laurence and I; then, with a great cry, our hearts, long-tortured, sprang together. There never can be such a meeting, save that of two parted ones who meet in heaven. No words were spoken, save a murmur, "Adelaide!" "Laurence!" but we know that between us two there was but one soul. We stood there all the while the storm lasted. He sheltered me in his arms, and I felt neither the thunder nor the rain. I feared not life nor death, for I knew that in either I should never be divided from him.

* * * Ours was a brief engagement. Laurence wished it so; and I disputed not; I never disputed with him in any thing. Besides, I was not happy at home—my sisters did not understand him. They jested with me because he was grave and reserved—even subject to moody fits sometimes. They said I should have a great deal to put up with; but it was worth while, for Mr. Shelmerdine's grand estate atoned for all. My Laurence! as if I had ever thought whether he were rich or poor! I smiled, too, at my sisters' jests about his melancholy, and the possibility of his being "a bandit in disguise." None truly knew him; none but I! Yet I was half afraid of him at times, but that was only from the intensity of my love. I never asked him of his for me; how it grew, or why he had so long concealed it; enough for me that it was there. Yet it was always calm; he never showed any passionate emotion, save one night—the night before our wedding day.

I went with him to the gate myself, walking in the moonlight under the holly trees. I trembled a little, but I was happy—very happy. He held me long in his arms ere he would part with me—the last brief parting ere we would have no need to part any more. I said, looking up from his face unto the stars, "Laurence, in our full joy, let us thank God, and pray him to bless us."

His heart seemed bursting; he bowed his proud head, dropped it down upon my shoulder, and cried, "Nay, rather pray Him to *forgive* me, Adelaide, I am not worthy of happiness—I am not worthy of you."

He talked in this way! and about me! but I answered him soothingly, so that he might feel how dear was my love—how entire my trust.

He said, at last, half mournfully, "You are content to take me then, just as I am; to forgive my past, to bear with my present, to give hope to my future. Will you do this, my love, my Adelaide?"

I answered solemnly, "I will." Then, for the first time, I dared to lift my arms to his neck; and as he stooped I kissed his forehead. It was the seal of this, my promise—which God give me strength to keep ever more.

We were laughing to-day—Laurence and I—about *first loves*. It was scarcely a subject for mirth; but one of his bachelor friends had been telling us of a new-married couple, who, in some comical fashion, mutually made the discovery of each other's "first loves." I said to my husband, smiling happily, "that he need have no such fears." And I repeated, half in sport, the lines:

"He was her own, her ocean treasure, cast
Like a rich wreck—her first love, and her last."

So it was with your poor Adelaide." Touched by the thought, my gayety melted almost into tears. But I laughed

them off, and added, "Come Laurence, confess the same! you never loved any one but me?"

He looked pained, said coldly, "I believe I have never given cause—" then stopped. How I trembled; but I went up to him, and whispered, "Laurence, dearest, forgive me." He looked at me a moment, then caught me passionately to his breast. I wept there a little, my heart was so full. Yet I could not help again murmuring that question—"You love me? you *do* love me?"

"I love you as I never before loved woman. I swear this in the sight of heaven. Believe it, my wife!" was his vehement answer. I hated myself for having so tried him. My dear, my noble husband! I was mad to have a moment's doubt of thee.

* * * Nearly a year married, and it seems as a brief day; yet it seems, also like a lifetime—as if I had never known any other. My Laurence! daily I grow closer to him—heart to heart. I understand him better—if possible, I love him more; not with the wild worship of my girlhood, but with something dearer—more home-like. I would not have him an "angel," if I could. I know all his little faults and weaknesses quite well—I do not shut my eyes on any of them but I gaze openly at them, and love them down. There is love enough in my heart to fill up all chasms—to remove all stumbling-blocks from our path. Ours is truly a wedded life; not two jarring lives, but an harmonious and complete one.

I have taken a journey, and am somewhat dreary at being away, even for three days, from my pleasant home. But Laurence was obliged to go, and I would not let him go alone, though, from tenderness, he urged me to stay. So kind and thoughtful he was too. Because his engagements here would keep him much from me, he made me take likewise my sister Louisa. She is a good girl, and a dear girl, but I miss Laurence; I did especially in my walk to-day, through a lovely, wooded country, and a sweet little village. I was thinking of him all the time; so much so, that I was quite startled when I heard one of the village children shouted after as "Laurence."

Very foolish it is of me—a loving weakness I have not yet got over—but I never heard the name my husband bears, without a pleasant thrill; I never even see it written up in the street without turning again to look at it. So, unconsciously, I turned to the little rosy urchin, whom his grandam honored by the name of "Laurence."

A pretty, sturdy boy, of five or six years old—a child to gladden any mother. I wondered had he a mother! I stand and asked. I always notice children now. Oh! wonderful, solemn mystery sleeping at my heart—my hope, my joy, my prayer! I think, with tears, how I may one day watch the gambols of a boy like this; and how, looking down in his little face, I may see my Laurence's eyes. For the sake of this future—which God grant!—I went and kissed the little fellow who chanced to bear my husband's name. I asked the old woman about the boy's mother. "Dead! dead five years." And his father? A sneer—a muttered curse—bitter words about "poor folk" and "gentle folk." Alas! alas! I saw it all. Poor, beautiful, unhappy child.

To-morrow has come—to-morrow has gone! What a gulf lies between that yesterday and its to-morrow!

* * * Louisa and I walked to the village—she very

much against her will. "It is wrong and foolish," she said; "one should not meddle with vice." And she looked prudent and stern. I tried to speak of the innocent child—of the poor dead mother; and the shadow of motherhood over my own soul taught me compassion toward both. At last, when Louisa was half angry, I said I would go, for I had a secret reason which she did not know. Thank heaven, those words were put into my lips.

So we went. My little beauty of a boy was not there; and I had the curiosity to approach the cottage where his grandmother lived. It stood in a garden, with a high hedge around. I heard a child's laugh, and could not forbear peeping through. There was my little favorite held aloft in the arms of a man, who stood half hidden behind a tree.

"He looks like a gentleman; perhaps it is the wretch of a father!" whispered Louisa. "Sister, we ought to come away." And she walked forward indignantly.

But I still stayed—still looked. Despite my horror of the crime, I felt a sort of attraction; it was some sign of grace in the man that he should at least acknowledge and show kindness to his child. And the miserable mother!—I, a happy wife, could have wept to think of her. I wondered, did he think of her, too? He might; for, though the boy laughed and chattered, lavishing on him all those pet diminutives which children make out of the sweet word "father," I did not hear *this* father answer by a single word.

Louisa came to hurry me away. "Hush!" I said, "one moment and I will go."

The little one had ceased chattering; the father put it down and came forth from his covert.

Heaven! it was *my husband!*

I think I should then have fallen down dead, save for one thing—I turned and met my sister's eyes. They were full of horror, indignation, pity. She, too, had seen.

Like lightning there flashed across me all the future; my father's wrath—the world's mockery—*his* shame.

I said—and I had strength to say it quite calmly—"Louisa, you have guessed our secret, but keep it—promise!"

She looked aghast—confounded.

"You see," I went on, and I actually smiled, "you see, I know all about it, and so does Laurence. It is—a friend's child."

May heaven forgive me for that lie I told; it was to save my husband's honor.

Day after day, week after week, goes by and I live, and living keep the horrible secret in my soul. It must remain there buried forever, now.

It so chanced, after that hour I did not see my husband for some weeks: Louisa and I were hastily summoned home. So I had time to think what I was to do.

I knew all now—all the mystery of his fits of gloom—his secret sufferings. It was remorse, perpetual remorse. No marvel! And for a moment my stern heart said, "Let it be so." I, too, was wronged. Why did he marry me, and hide all this? O vile! O cruel! Then the light broke on me; his long struggle against his love—his terror of winning mine. But he did love me; half maddening as I was, I grasped at that. Whatever blackness was on the past, he loved me now—he had sworn it—"more than he ever loved woman."

I was yet young; I knew little of the wickedness of the world; but I had heard of that mad passion of a moment, which may seize on a heart not wholly vile, and afterward a

whole lifetime of remorse works out the expiation. Six years ago; he must have been then a mere boy. If he had thus erred in youth, I, who knew his nature, knew how awful must have been the repentance of his manhood. On any humbled sinner I would have mercy—how much rather must I have mercy on *my husband!*

I had mercy. Some, stern in virtue, may condemn me; but God knoweth all.

He is—I believe it in my soul—he is a good man now, and striving more and more after good. I will help him—I will save him. Never shall he know that secret, which out of pride or bitterness might drive him back from virtue or make him feel shame before me.

I took my resolution—I have fulfilled it. I have met him again, as a faithful wife should meet her husband; no word, no look, betrays, or shall betray, what I know. All our outward life goes on as before; his tenderness for me is constant—overflowing. But oh! the agony worse than death, of knowing my idol fallen—that, where I once worshipped, I can only pity, weep, and pray.

He told me yesterday he did not feel like the same man he was before his marriage. He said I was his good angel; that through me he became calmer, happier every day. It was true; I read the change in his face. Others read it too. Even his aged mother told me, with tears, how much good I had done to Laurence. For this, thank God!

My husband! my husband! At times I could almost think this horror was some delirious dream, cast it all to the winds, and worship him as of old. I do feel, as I ought, deep tenderness—compassion. No, no! let me not deceive myself; I love him; in defiance of all, I love and shall do evermore.

Sometimes his olden sufferings come over him; and then I, knowing the whole truth, feel my very soul moved within me. If he had only told me all; if I could now lay my heart open before him, with all its love and pardon; if he would let me comfort him, and speak of hope, of heaven's mercy, of atonement, even on earth,—but I dare not, I dare not.

Since this silence he has seen fit to keep, I must not share the struggle, but must stay afar off—then, like the prophet who knelt on the rock, supplicating for Israel in the battle, let my hands fail not, nor my prayers cease, until heaven sendeth the victory.

* * * * *

In Mr. Shelmerdine's absence, I have accomplished my plan. I have contrived to visit the place where lives that hapless child—my husband's child.

I do believe my love to Laurence must be such as never before was borne to man by woman. It draws me even toward this little one; forgetting all wife-like pride, I seem to yearn over the boy. But is this strange? In my girlish dreams, many a time I have taken a book he had touched—a flower he had gathered—hid it from my sisters, kissed it, and wept over it for days. It was folly; but it only showed how precious I held every thing belonging to him. And should I not hold precious what is half himself—his own son?

I will go and see the child to-morrow.

Weeks have passed, and yet I have had no strength to tell what that to-morrow brought. Strange book of human fate! each leaf closed until the appointed time, if we could but turn it, and read. Yet it is best not.

I went to the cottage, alone, of course. I asked the old

woman to let me come in and rest for I was a stranger, weak and tired. She did so kindly, remembering, perhaps, how I had once noticed the boy. He was her grandson she told me, her daughter's child.

Her daughter! And this old creature was a coarse, rough spoken woman—a laborer's wife. Laurence Sheldermine, the elegant, the refined, what madness must have possessed him.

"She died very young then, your daughter?" I found courage to say.

"Ay, ay: in a few months after the boy's birth. She was but a weekly thing at best, and she had troubles enow."

Quickly came the blood to my heart, to my cheek, in bitter shame. I shrank like a guilty thing before that mother's eye. I dared not ask—what I longed to hear—concerning the poor girl, and her sad history.

"Is the child like her?" was all I could say, looking to where the little one was playing, at the far end of the garden. I was glad not to see him nearer. "Was his mother as beautiful as he?"

"Ay, a good-looking lass enough; but the little lad's like his father, who was a gentleman born: though Laurence had better ha' been a plowman's son. A bad business Bess made of it. To this day I dunnot know her right name nor little Laurence's there; and so I canna make his father own him. He ought, for the lad's growing up as grand a gentleman as himself; he'll never do to live with poor folk like granny."

"Alas!" I cried, forgetting all but my compassion; "then how will the child hear his lot of shame!"

"Shame!" and the old woman came up fiercely to me. "You had better mind your own business; my Bess was as good as you."

I trembled violently, but could not speak. The woman went on.

"I dunnot care if I blab it all out, though Bess begged me not. She was a fool, and the young fellow something worse. His father tried—may be he wished to try too—but they could na undo what had been done. My girl was safe married to him, and the little lad's a gentleman's lawful son."

Oh! joy beyond belief! Oh! bursting blessed tears! My Laurence! My Laurence!

* * * I have no clear recollection of anything more, save that I suppose the woman thought me mad, and fled out of the cottage. My first consciousness is of finding myself quite alone, with the door open, and a child looking in at me in wonderment, but with a gentleness such as I have seen my husband wear. No marvel I had loved that childish face; it was such as might have been his when he was a boy.

I cried, tremulously, "Laurence! little Laurence!" He came to me, smiling and pleased. One faint struggle I had, forgive me, poor dead girl! and then I took the child in my arms and kissed him as though I had been his mother. For thy sake—for thy sake—my husband!

I understand all the past now. The wild, boyish passion, making an ideal out of a poor village girl—the unequal union—the dream fading into common day—coarseness creating repulsion—the sting of one folly which had marred a lifetime—dread of the world, self-reproach, and shame—all these excuses I could find: and yet Laurence had acted ill. And when the end came: no wonder that remorse pursued him, for he had broken a girl's heart. She might, she must have loved him. I wept for her—I, who so passionately loved him to.

He was wrong, also, greivously wrong, in not acknowledg-

ing the child. Yet there might have been reasons. His father ruled with an iron hand; and, when he died, Laurence had just known me. Alas! I weave all coverings to hide his fault. But surely this strong, faithful love was implanted in my heart for good. It shall not fail him now: it shall encompass him with arms of peace; it shall stand between him and the bitter past: it shall lead him on to a happy future.

There is one thing which he must do: I will strengthen him to do it. Yet, when I tell him all, how will he meet it? No matter: I must do right. I have walked through this cloud of mystery—shall my courage fail me now?

He came home, nor knew that I had been away. Something oppressed him: his old grief perhaps. My beloved! I have a balm even for that now.

* * * I told him the story, as it were in a parable, not of myself, but of another, a friend I had. His color came and went—his hands trembled in my hold. I hid nothing: I told of the wife's first horrible fear of her misery, and the red flush mounted to his very brow. I could have fallen at his feet, and prayed forgiveness? but I dared not yet. At last I spoke of the end, still using the feigned names I had used all along.

He said, hoarsely, "Do you think the wife, a good and pure woman, would forgive all this?"

"Forgive! Oh! Laurence, Laurence!" and I clung to him and wept.

A doubt seemed to strike him. Adelaide, tell me—

"I have told. Husband, forgive me! I know all, and still I love you!"

I did not say *I pardon*. I would not let him think that I felt I had need to pardon.

* * * The tale of his youth was as I guessed. He told it me the same night, when we sat in the twilight gloom. I was glad of this, that not even his wife's eyes might scan too closely the pang it cost him to reveal those long-past days. But all the while he spoke my hand was on his breast, that he might feel I held my place there still, and that no error, no grief, no shame, could change my love for him, nor make me doubt his own, which I had won.—[Harpers' Magazine.]

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